

~~TOP SECRET~~

#79001-a

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

19 January 1954

SUBJECT: DRAFT SPECIAL BOARD ESTIMATE: PROBABLE EUROPEAN  
REACTIONS TO US PROPOSALS REGARDING BERLIN

THE PROBLEM

To estimate the reactions of the UK, France, and West Germany to a US proposal for the prompt use of forceful measures in the event of a Soviet blockade or action tantamount to a blockade of Berlin.

ASSUMPTIONS

1. That Soviet or East German measures have reached a point threatening the access to Berlin of the Western Allies, West Germany, or both.
2. That the Western Allies have held the Soviets responsible for these measures, and have affirmed their right and intent to maintain their positions in Berlin and unrestricted access thereto, and their objection to the Soviet or East German measures, which have nonetheless been continued or increased.
3. That the US and the Western Allies have not instituted an airlift to supply Berlin, (other than for purposes such as personnel transfer, special needs, etc.).
4. That, by virtue of its stockpile, Berlin is not in physical distress or in prospect of being so within a period of 3 to 6 months.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

5. That the US proposal calls for the use of "limited military force, initially to the extent necessary to determine Soviet intentions (e.g., by armed convoy under orders not to shoot except in self-defense)," thereafter to attempt to reopen access to Berlin (e.g., by armed convoy under orders to shoot if prevented from going through). In either case the US would make clear to its allies its belief that Berlin is not militarily defensible and that if determined Soviet armed opposition should develop when US units attempt to force their way into or out of Berlin, no additional forces would be committed, but resort would have to be made to general war.

6. That the US would propose, or would already have initiated, measures to step up US readiness for war.

#### DISCUSSION

7. The British, French, and West Germans would almost certainly not regard a new blockade of Berlin as equivalent to a deliberate initiation of general war by the USSR. They would, therefore, insist that every effort be made to achieve an end of the blockade without resorting to acts which might result in general war even though not intended to have such a result. They would expect these efforts to be continued over a considerable time, and would wish to leave ways open to the USSR to retreat from its position without unacceptable loss of prestige. As a last resort, these governments might reluctantly consent to a test of the blockade by an armed convoy under orders not to fire except in self-defense.

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

8. We do not believe that the British, French, or West Germans would be willing to run grave risk of precipitating World War III solely in order to preserve the Western position in Berlin, when it had not been put in jeopardy by armed attack. The chances are, therefore, that none of these governments would support the US in the use of forceful means to break the blockade. They would fear that World War III might ensue, even though neither the US nor the USSR desired it.

9. On the other hand, the Western powers might become convinced in the course of negotiations that the USSR, pursuant to a long-term plan of aggression, had determined to subject the Western powers to an important defeat, even at grave risk of precipitating World War III. If thus convinced, we believe that the UK and probably West Germany would conclude that the issue had best be faced. They might therefore support the US in sending an armed convoy with orders to force their way through if opposed. We doubt that the French government would agree.

10. If the US should ignore allied opposition to its proposals and general war should result from US action, a large bloc of official and popular European opinion would hold that the war could

- 3 -

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~TOP SECRET~~

have been avoided and would blame US impulsiveness rather than Soviet aggressiveness for its initiation. Neutralist sentiment would spread broadly. Nevertheless, the British, French, and West German governments would probably desire to adhere to the Western coalition under US leadership. However, in the face of widespread apathy and doubt they might be easy victims to atomic blackmail by the USSR.

- 4 -

~~TOP SECRET~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

# SIGNATURE RECORD AND COVER SHEET

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION		REGISTRY
SOURCE	O/NE 79001-a	CIA CONTROL NO.
Doc. No.	Berlin paper	DATE DOC. REC'D.
Doc. Date	19 Jan 54	LOGGED BY
Copy No.	Cy # 2	
NO. of Pages	4 tot pgs	
NO. OF ATTACHMENTS	none	

**ATTENTION:** THIS FORM WILL BE ATTACHED TO EACH TOP SECRET DOCUMENT RECEIVED BY THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY OR CLASSIFIED TOP SECRET WITHIN THE CIA AND WILL REMAIN ATTACHED TO THE DOCUMENT UNTIL SUCH TIME AS IT IS DOWNGRADED, DESTROYED OR TRANSMITTED OUTSIDE OF CIA. ACCESS TO TOP SECRET MATERIAL IS LIMITED TO THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHOSE OFFICIAL DUTIES RELATE TO THE MATERIAL. EACH ALTERNATE OR ASSISTANT TOP SECRET CONTROL OFFICER WHO RECEIVES AND/OR RELEASES THE ATTACHED TOP SECRET MATERIAL WILL SIGN THIS FORM AND INDICATE PERIOD OF CUSTODY IN THE LEFT-HAND COLUMNS PROVIDED. THE NAME OF EACH INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS SEEN THE TOP SECRET DOCUMENT AND THE DATE OF HANDLING SHOULD BE INDICATED IN THE RIGHT-HAND COLUMNS.

REFERRED TO		RECEIVED		RELEASED		SEEN BY	
OFFICE	SIGNATURE	DATE	TIME	DATE	TIME	NAME & OFFICE SYMBOL	DATE
01NE	[REDACTED]			19 Jan	0900		25X1A9a
[REDACTED]						[REDACTED]	19 Jan
25X1A	25X1A9a					JOB NO. 79A10904A	
						BOX NO. 2	
						FOLDER NO. 1	
						TOTAL DOCS HEREIN	
						DOCUMENT NO. 5	
						NO CHANGE IN CLASS. D	
						<input type="checkbox"/> DECLASSIFIED	
						CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C	
						NEXT REVIEW DATE:	
						AUTH. HB 20-2	
						DATE 1-5-80 REVIEWER: 372044	

NOTICE OF DETACHMENT: WHEN THIS FORM IS DETACHED FROM TOP SECRET MATERIAL IT SHALL BE COMPLETED IN THE APPROPRIATE SPACES BELOW AND TRANSMITTED TO CENTRAL TOP SECRET CONTROL FOR RECORD.

THE TOP SECRET MATERIAL DETACHED FROM THIS FORM WAS:

DOWNGRADED

DESTROYED

DISPATCHED (OUTSIDE CIA) TO

BY (SIGNATURE)

OFFICE

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Approved For Release 2001/08/14 : CIA-RDP79B00904A000200010062-6